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THE OBSERVATOR.

The Account publiſh'd by Authority of the Battel of Almanza: *Remarks thereon. Of the* Portugueze *killing one another. The Neceſſity of a good Management of our Fleet, in order to reduce* Spain.

From Saturday, June 4. to Wednesday, June 7. 1707.

WELL, Honeſt *Country-man*, what News now?

Country-m. Maſter, I have brought you the Account of the Battail of *Almanza*, publiſh'd by Authority: My Heart's almoſt broke: Nay, Maſter, if you can find any Word of Comfort in it, tell it me, that my Spirits may once more riſe.

Obſ. Roger, 'tis a Comfort, that tho' we have loſt a Battel, it was not loſt for Want of *Engliſh* Courage or Conduct.

Roger, you know, you and I have ſuffer'd ſufficiently already by Mr. *Envoy*'s Complaint, and don't yet know when we ſhall get clear of it. But let Mankind judge of the Conduct in taking away ſo many of the beſt Horſe and Dragoons, to viſit a Town, when they were wanted in the Field, and all Men believ'd the firſt Battel would decide the Fate of *Spain*.

One would think this Inſtance ſhould be ſufficient to ſatisfy thoſe who put their Truſt in Wooden Gods and Images, the Creatures of Carpenters and Stone-cutters, that have no Power or Influence in War; and that the Queen of *Great Britain*'s Forces did more Service to the Houſe of *Auſtria*, at the Battel of *Almanza*, than the Queen of Heaven, with her numerous Army of Saints and brittle Images.

Country-m. Maſter, I'll never more take the *Virgin Mary*'s Word for a Battel: And, I think it would do well to melt down all thoſe Images and Shrines into Money, to pay the Forces, and to leſſen the Charge of the Confederates; 'tis the only Way that I know, to make the Images propagate, to turn 'em into Caſh, and raiſe Men with it: Wou'dn't this do better, Maſter, than to carry hugy great Crucifixes and Images of our Lady, forſooth, in the Front of the Battail, to encourage the Fellows to run away; for what need they charge the Enemy? En't the *Virgin Mary* preſent? And can't they depend upon her Power, as well as their Superiours?

Obſ. Roger, let us have never ſo many Saints in our Intereſt, I find we are bedevill'd in *Spain*. But I thank God 'tis none of our Fault. If Powers ally'd will not act in Concert, 'tis the Fault of thoſe that draw back, or don't come in according to Agreement, if any Misfortune happens. As in Battel, if either Wing of the Army, the Centure, any Regiment or Battalion, even down to a ſingle Company, does not perform its Duty, it is what makes a Chaſm in War, and can be eſteem'd no other than a Defect.

Roger, I do defy the moſt malicious of our Enemies, to reflect on the Diſpoſition of our Forces in Order of Battel; whether ever an Army conſiſting of ſuch very different Parts, was ever more judiciouſly drawn up to make a Front againſt an Enemy ſo ſuperior in Numbers? And let all World judge, if they pleaſe, of the Conduct and Courage of our Men in the Action; but ſorry am I, that ſuch brave Follows ſhould be kill'd by Paltrons. However, it redounds to the Earl of *Gallway*'s Praiſe, and to the other General Officers and Soldiers, that they did not fear Numbers, but ventur'd a Battel againſt Superiority.

Country-m. Maſter, I am no Soldier; I love to hear fighting Stories, but I would not ſee a Battel for any Thing. Yet, Maſter, as poor a Fellow, and as ignorant as I am, I can ſee where the Fault lay.

Obſ. But pray don't ſpeak of it. Don't you remember how I was ſerv'd for ſeeing a little farther into *Germany*, than the reſt of the People; and now every Bodies Eyes are open, they ſay ſtill I am an impudent Fellow, to ſee farther, and before my Superiors and Betters.

Country-m. It has been known, that ſome Men in great Poſts have thought it their Buſineſs rather to *lug in*, than *look out*, that is, to fill their *Bags*, rather than their *Heads*. But, Maſter, I'll tell you, for all that, how this Miſcarriage happen'd; 'tis as plain as a Pike-ſtaff; our Choice Dragoons and Horſe were gone to tell the Stones in the Walls of *Barcelona*, and ſo were wanted when we fought the Enemy. How can the beſt Game Cock in *England* perform his Battel, when he's Wing-broke, or to fight with his dubb'd Spurs, when t'other fights with Gafflets? A Cock under ſuch Diſadvantages, muſt of Neceſſity be beaten out of the Pit.

Obſ. They'll ſay, thou ar't a Coxcomb for talking at this Rate: Have a Care, my *Country-man*, that no Complaint comes againſt you.

Country-m. Maſter, every Body's Eyes are open to ſee, and their Mouths open to ſpeak of this Subject: There are ſo many Criminal in this Caſe, that the Complainer will find a hard Taſk of it, and *Bind-'em-over* will have ſo much Buſineſs in his Hands, that he won't be able to adminiſter a Negative Oath. The whole Nation muſt be put under a State Interdict, if all the Criminals in *Britain* be puniſh'd for this Crime. Why, ſo long ago, I did not find any Body condemn'd you for ſpeaking what we ſee, but Mr. *Secretary*, and Mr. *Envoy*.

But, Maſter, tho' I am no Soldier, I have a thinking Noddle ſometimes; and 'tis my Country Opinion, that if 'twas neceſſary to take a Tour to *Barcelona*, to eat a few green Peaſe and Colliflowers,

Colliflowers, that the Paltrons of the Army might have ſerv'd for that Expedition, and not a Detachment of the beſt Troops.

Obſ. Roger, thou ar't certainly bewitch'd; thou talk'ſt at a ſtrange Rate.

Country-m. Maſter, I an't bewitch'd, but I am mad, and can't help ſpeaking: Why look ye, d'ye ſee, Maſter, this is one of the ſtrangeſt Accounts that ever was printed, I'll read you a Bit of it. "Two *Portugueze* Battalions, who "were poſted at ſome Diſtance, when their "Cavalry were retiring, ſuppoſing it had been "the Enemy coming down upon them, gave "them a Volley, and kill'd and wounded ſeve-"ral of their own Men."

Obſ. Aye, *Roger!* that was not civilly done. My Lord *Thommond*'s Cocks fought one another, becauſe they had no other Cocks to fight with; but here was a whole Pit full of Enemy-Cocks.

Country-m. Maſter, an't theſe *Portugal* Folks all purblind, that they don't know one from t'other? I fancy they fight naked in thoſe hot Countries, and ſo are not diſtinguiſh'd by Regimental Clothing.

Obſ. But what if this appears to be a Piece of Conduct in thoſe Battalions? And that they fir'd at their Horſe to ſtop 'em, that they might not run away, and leave the Foot uncover'd and expos'd?

Country-m. No, no, Maſter, that won't do, it was a Miſtake, and all Miſtakes proceed from Folly and Ignorance; but in War, from ſome one, ſome t'other; partly from Ignorance, and partly from Cowardice. I don't wonder now, that they fir'd more than once at our Men of War: But, what the Devil, do they carry their Gods and their Saints along with 'em to Battel? Are the Deities as purblind as their Votaries, that they can't tell 'em who are their own Men, and who not?

Obſ. There are many Things we might talk on this Subject, which can only enlighten the Minds of the common People, who wiſh as well to the Publick, as our ſelves; but neither of us can help mend 'em; that's out of our Power: But Madam *Neceſſity* can do it, we have felt the Effect of her Power many a Time.

Country-m. Maſter, I think Things are well enough. In all Armies there are ſome to fight, and ſome to run away. Were I to be a Soldier, as I think I ſhall never be, I would liſt my ſelf with the *Portugueze*, or with the *Germans* at *Stolhoffen*; theirs are good long Lines; I hate to be tedder'd in the Field of War, where, inſtead of Herbage, one muſt eat blew Leaden Plums, and Iron Dumplins: I had rather run away by half.

Obſ. The Buſineſs is now over, and we need ſay no more to the Point, but conclude upon the whole, That King *Charles* had been in Poſſeſſion of *Spain*, had not ſuch a Body of our Horſe and Dragoons been wanting; as once before, could we have enter'd *Madrid* without other Solemnities, than the Pomp of War.

Perhaps, ſome People would eſteem it invidious in me, to tell how fatal the Loſs of our Tranſport Ships taken by *Du Queſne* has prov'd to the Affairs of *Spain*; but all Men that know the true Intereſt of *England*, muſt confeſs with me, that a good Management of our Fleet, is the particular Intereſt of us, and the whole Confederacy.

How the Confederated Powers in *Spain*, after this Repulſe, will be able to manage by Land, Time muſt ſhow us; but 'tis certain our Fleet muſt preſerve *Barcelona*, *Alicant*, and other Ports in our Poſſeſſion.

I can't help reflecting on our Management at the ginning of the War: None but the *Obſervator*, an *Country-man* were for taking *Port-Mahone*, as the neceſſary Place for the Houſe of *Auſtria*'s Intereſt poor Fellows muſt not be taken Notice of. Tho viſible Effects of it, would have been the declari the *Italian* Princes, who have Sea-Ports, and whoſe jects depend upon Trade, who could not do it when *French* were Maſters of the *Mediterranean* Sea. Ha been Maſters of that Sea at firſt, which we might fily have been, the *French* would have been beaten of the *Streights*, and the *Turkey*-Trade, and our chants would have been in Poſſeſſion of all; but could not be done without a Winter-Guard: And ſuch Guard could be without a Port for its Secur than which, none was fitter than *Port-Mahone*.

For here we might have kept Hulks for careening Ships, with all manner of Naval Stores; here we m have kept the Victualling-Stores, and have been ply'd with Proviſions at a cheap Rate from the Coa *Barbary*: From hence we had ſoon been at Sea, to an the Enemy, or to protect our Trade and Shipping. H we might ——: But 'tis in vain to talk of what mi have been; my honeſt *Country-man*, what ſhall we do this preſent Conjuncture?

Country-m. I think we muſt do, as the Folk do Trap-Ball, take all that is done in *Spain* for a *Lik* and if we don't like it, as we have no great Reaſon to do, proceed *de Novo*, and begin at *Port-Mahone* laſt.

For, Maſter, if the Duke *d' Anjou* does happen to the Inland-Country, the Ports muſt be ſav'd by our Shi ping, and our Fleet muſt have ſome Port; they ca live always at Sea, in Deſpight of Storms and Te peſts, nor without conſtant Supplies of Ammuniti and Proviſion.

Now, ſuppoſe our Fleet ſhould return home this Wi ter, how eaſy is it for the *French*, from *Thoulon* and *M ſeilles*, to aſſiſt their Land-Army in the Reduction the Sea-Ports.

Obſ. 'Tis in vain to talk, *Roger*. We want a Se Genius; when we ſhall find it, I can't tell.

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